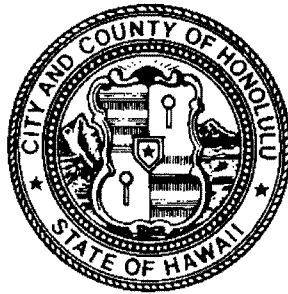


## **DRIVER TAILGATE LESSON PLAN**

# **Staying Alert and Fit to Drive**



CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
Division of Industrial Safety and Workers' Compensation

# STAYING ALERT AND FIT TO DRIVE

Your ability to safely perform driving maneuvers often depends on your mental and physical well being. If your physical or mental state is such that you are unable to make sound decisions, you will not be able to drive to the best of your ability. Anything that weakens or removes your ability to perform well or to make sound decisions is called an **impairment**. It is important for you, as a professional driver, to understand how **impairments** affect your ability to perform. Fatigue, alcohol and drugs **impair** your ability to drive safely.

## BE READY TO DRIVE

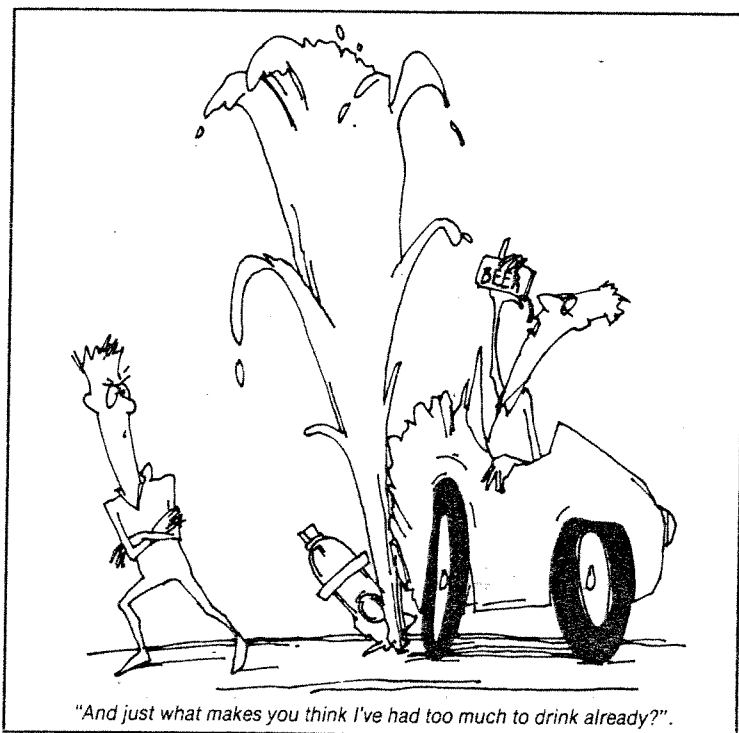
Driving a vehicle is tiring. Even the best drivers become less alert as the day wears on. Here are a few things professional drivers do to help stay alert and safe:

- **Get enough sleep.** Coming to work when you are already tired is dangerous. Make sure you get a good rest before you come to work. Most people require 7 - 8 hours of sleep every 24 hours.
- **Avoid medication.** Many medications can make you sleepy. Those that do, have a label warning against operating vehicles or machinery. The most common medicine of this type is an ordinary cold pill such as Contact.
- **Take breaks.** Short breaks can help keep you alert. The time to take breaks is **before** you feel drowsy or tired. Rest when you're tired. Pushing yourself to finish the job when you are tired is dangerous and often fatal.
- **Avoid Drugs.** There are no drugs that can overcome fatigue. While they may keep you awake for a while, they will not make you more alert. Sleep is the only way to overcome fatigue.

## ALCOHOL AND DRIVING

Drinking and then driving is a very serious problem. People who drink alcohol are involved in traffic accidents resulting in over 20,000 deaths every year. The following will help you understand:

- How alcohol works in the human body.
- How it affects driving.
- Laws regarding drinking and driving.
- Legal, financial and safety risks of drinking and driving.



## The Truth About Alcohol

There are many dangerous ideas about the use of alcohol. The driver who believes in these false ideas is more likely to get into trouble. Here are some examples:

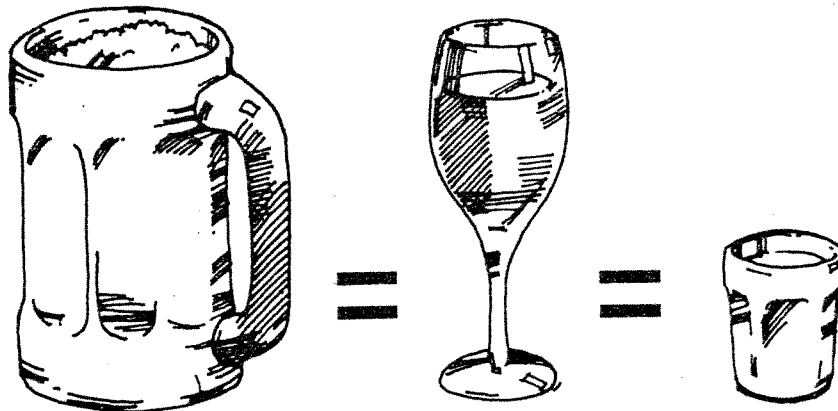
FALSE	TRUTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alcohol increases your ability to drive.</li></ul>	Alcohol is a drug that will make you less alert and reduce your ability to drive safely.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some people can drink a lot and not be affected by alcohol.</li></ul>	Everyone who drinks is affected by alcohol.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you eat a lot first, you won't get drunk.</li></ul>	Food will not keep you from getting drunk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coffee and a little fresh air will help a drinker sober up.</li></ul>	Only the passage of time will help a drinker sober up — other methods just don't work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stick with beer - it's not as strong as wine or whiskey.</li></ul>	A few beers have the same amount of alcohol as a few shots of whiskey or a few glasses of wine.

## What's in a Drink?

The alcohol in drinks affects human performance. It doesn't make any difference whether the alcohol comes from a couple of beers, two glasses of wine or two shots of hard liquor.

All of the following drinks **contain the same amount of alcohol**:

- A 12 ounce can of 5% beer
- A 5 ounce glass of 12% wine
- A 1 1/2 ounce shot of 80 proof liquor



## How Alcohol Works in the Body

Alcohol goes directly from the stomach into the blood stream. A drinker can control the amount of alcohol that enters the bloodstream by having fewer drinks or none at all. However, the drinker cannot control how fast the body can get rid of alcohol. If you drink alcohol faster than your body can get rid of it, you will have more alcohol in your bloodstream and your ability to drive safely will be affected. The amount of alcohol in your body is measured by the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC).

## What Determines Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

BAC is determined by *the amount of alcohol you drink* (more alcohol means a higher BAC), *how fast you drink* (faster drinking means a higher BAC), and *your weight* (a small person doesn't have to drink as much as a larger person to reach the same BAC).

**IT'S A CRIME THE WAY SOME PEOPLE DRINK AND DRIVE**

Body Weight	Number of Drinks in a Two Hour Period									
100	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
120	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
140	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
160	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
180	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
200	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
220	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Blood Alcohol Concentration	Warning				Impaired		Intoxicated			
	Drive w/Caution BAC to 0.05%				Don't Drive 0.05-0.09%		Illegal to Drive 0.10 + Up			

Hawaii Law indicates 0.10% BAC legally under the influence.

Important: This chart is only a guide & not sufficiently accurate to be considered legal evidence.

## Alcohol and the Brain

Alcohol affects more and more of the brain as BAC increases. The first part of the brain affected, controls judgement and self control. The result of this is that drinkers do not know when they are getting drunk. And of course, good judgement and self control are absolutely essential for safe driving. As blood alcohol concentration continues to increase, muscle control, vision, and coordination are affected more and more. Eventually, with enough alcohol, a person will pass out.

## How Alcohol Affects Driving

All drivers are affected by drinking alcohol. Alcohol affects judgement, vision, coordination, and reaction time. It causes serious driving errors, such as:

- Increased reaction time to hazards and emergencies.
- Driving too fast or too slow.
- Driving in the wrong lane.
- Running over the curb.
- Weaving.
- Straddling lanes.
- Quick, jerky starts.
- Not signaling, failure to use lights.
- Running stop signs and red lights.
- Improper passing.

These errors increase chances of a crash and often result in the loss of your driver's license. Accident statistics show that the chance of a accident is much greater for those who have been drinking than for drivers who were not.

## Laws Regarding Drinking and Driving

### Commercial Drivers: *(Driving a Commercial Vehicle)*

You will lose your Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) if you drive and your BAC is 0.04 percent or more (you are driving under the influence of alcohol). You will lose your CDL for one year (three years if you are carrying hazardous material) for your first offense. You will lose your CDL for life for your second offense. If your BAC is less than 0.04 percent but you have any detectable amount, you will be taken out of service (not allowed to drive) for 24 hours.

### All Other Drivers:

If you drive and your BAC is 0.10 percent or more, you are driving under the influence of alcohol.

- First Offense: 90 day license suspension and 14 hour alcohol abuse and counseling program; plus 72 hours of community service; and/or 48 hours in jail; and/or \$150-\$1000 fine.
- Second Offense: 1 year license suspension and \$500-\$1000 fine; plus 80 hours of community service or 48 hours in jail.
- Third Offense: License revoked for 1-5 years and \$500-\$1000 fine and 10-180 days in jail.

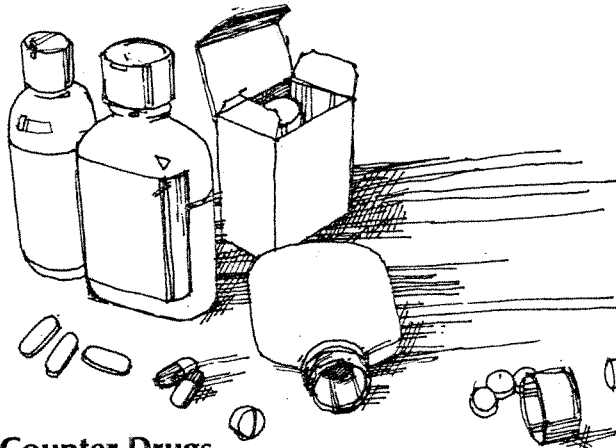
**NOTE:** For 2nd, 3rd and subsequent offenses within 5 years of a prior conviction, the court shall require that the offender's alcohol abuse or dependence be assessed. The court may require recommended treatment.

### Refusal to Submit to a Blood or Breath Test:

- First Offense: License revoked for 12 months.
- Second and Subsequent Offenses: License revoked for two to five years.

## DRUGS AND DRIVING

Besides alcohol, there are other legal and illegal drugs that impair your judgement, vision coordination and reaction time.



### Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs

A variety of prescription and over-the-counter drugs (cold medicines) may make a driver drowsy or otherwise affect safe driving ability. Possession and use of a drug prescribed by a doctor is permitted if the doctor informs the driver that it will not affect the driver's safe driving ability (such as sugar pills, blood pressure pills, etc.). Pay attention to warning labels of drugs and medications and to the doctor's instructions regarding possible adverse effects. Don't use any drug that hides fatigue — the only cure for fatigue is rest. Alcohol and drugs taken in combination can be fatal, never combine the two. **DRUGS AND DRIVING DON'T MIX.** Use of drugs can lead to arrest, fines, and jail sentences, not to mention higher insurance costs and other financial and family problems.

## **Illegal Drugs**

Laws prohibit possession or use of many drugs. Being under the influence of any "controlled substance"; an amphetamine (including "pep pills" and "bennies"); narcotics or any other such substances can impair the driver and make driving unsafe. Stay away from illegal drugs. A list of the effects of drugs on driving is attached.

### **Commercial Drivers:**

If you drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle under the influence of drugs, you will lose your CDL for one year (three years if you are carrying hazardous material) for your first offense. You will lose your CDL for life for your second offense.

### **All Other Drivers:**

If you drive under the influence of drugs, you will be fined not more than \$1000, or up to 1 year in jail, or both.

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## **ILLNESS AND DRIVING**

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Once in a while, you may become so ill that you cannot operate a motor vehicle safely. If this happens to you, avoid driving. However, if you are already driving when you become ill, drive to the nearest place where you can safely stop and get help.

## **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. WILL COFFEE AND FRESH AIR HELP A DRINKER SOBER UP?
2. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU BECOME SLEEPY WHILE YOU ARE DRIVING?
3. CAN COMMON COLD MEDICATIONS THAT CAN BE BOUGHT WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION AFFECT YOUR DRIVING ABILITY? IF YES, HOW?
4. WHAT DETERMINES THE BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC) OF A PERSON WHO CONSUMES BEER, WINE OR HARD LIQUOR?

**IF YOU CAN ANSWER ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY YOU PROBABLY  
KNOW THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND FATIGUE ON DRIVING.  
IF NOT, YOU SHOULD REVIEW THIS MATERIAL AGAIN.**

# THE EFFECT OF DRUGS ON DRIVING

<u>TYPE OF DRUG</u>	<u>USE OF DRUG</u>	<u>EFFECTS OF DRUG</u>
TRANQUILIZER	Used to reduce tensions, create a sense of relaxation and well-being.	Impairs driver's judgement, vision, and reaction speed. May cause drowsiness, headache, nausea, and dizziness. If used while person is tired or if used with alcohol, may cause loss of consciousness.
AMPHETAMINES ("Pep pills")	Used as a general stimulant, to overcome psychological depression, physical fatigue or weakness.	Impairs driver's judgement by causing false sense of exhilaration and over confidence. Sometimes causes hallucinations. When drugs begin to wear off, person may feel extreme fatigue and drowsiness.
"STAY-AWAKE" DRUGS WITH CAFFEINE	Used as a mild stimulant to overcome physical fatigue temporarily.	Although person may feel more awake and alert, physical fatigue is not decreased; driver's judgement and reaction speed may be considerably worse than he realizes.
ANTI-HISTAMINES ("Cold pills")	Used to relieve the symptoms of the common cold, allergies, and related diseases, by reducing sneezing, sinus congestion, etc.	Usually causes drowsiness, loss of alertness; may also cause dizziness, nausea, and impaired judgement and vision.
MARIJUANA	Illegal	Causes over-confidence and false sense of exhilaration, hallucinations, seriously impaired perception and reaction speed.
HALLUCINOGENS (LSD, STP, etc.)	Illegal	Causes hallucinations, almost total loss of judgement, perception, and ability to react.
"MILD" OPIATES (Morphine, codeine)	Illegal except when prescribed by a doctor to reduce pain.	Strong depressants, causing serious loss of judgement and ability to react, may cause loss of consciousness and hallucinations; usually causes drowsiness.
"STRONG" OPIATES (Opium, heroin, cocaine, etc.)	Illegal	All are extreme depressants (except cocaine, a stimulant) which may cause hallucinations and loss of consciousness.
ANTIBIOTICS (Sulfa drugs, mycins, penicillin, etc.)	Prescribed to counteract diseases including viruses, bacterial illness, and infections.	May cause drowsiness, headache, nausea, loss of visual perception some loss of judgement.